

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) Streptococcus thermophilus strains deposited at BCCM/LMG (Gent/Belgium) P-18383 and P-18384.

2. (currently amended) Nucleic acid molecule having the sequence ~~Seq. ID N°. 1~~ SEQ ID NO. 1.

3. (original) Plasmid containing the nucleic acid molecule of claim 2.

4. (original) Plasmid obtainable from a culture of Streptococcus thermophilus strain N. P-18384 according to claim 1, having 3375 base pairs and a single restriction site for each AccI, AseI, AsnI, EcoRV, FokI, NotI, PstI, PvuII, XbaI nuclease.

5. (original) Plasmid obtainable from a culture of Streptococcus thermophilus strain N. P-18384 according to claim 1, having 6184 base pairs and a single restriction site for each AvaI, HindIII, KpnI, PvuI, SacI, SacII, SalI, SpeI, SphI nuclease.

6. (original) Plasmid obtainable from a culture of *Streptococcus thermophilus* strain N. P-18383 according to claim 1, having 9515 base pairs and a single restriction site for each *AvaI*, *NotI*, *PstI*, *PvuI*, *PvuII*, *SacI*, *SacII*, *SalI*, *SphI* nuclease.

7. (previously presented) Microorganism containing the plasmid of claim 3.

8. (original) Microorganism according to claim 7, selected from *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus lactis*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Escherichia coli*, *Lc. lactis* subsp. *lactis*, *Lc. lactis* subsp. *diacetylactis*, *Lc. Cremoris*, *Lb. delbrueckii* subsp. *Lactis*, *Lb. delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus*, *Lb. delbrueckii* subsp. *delbrueckii*, *Lb. Helveticus*, *Lb. casei*.

9. (previously presented) Starter culture for milk fermentation, comprising a microorganism of claim 1.

10. (previously presented) Use of a plasmid of claim 3, alone or in combination with a conjugative plasmid, for conferring phage resistance to a bacterium.

11. (previously presented) Starter culture for milk fermentation, comprising a microorganism of claim 7.

12. (previously presented) Starter culture for milk fermentation, comprising a microorganism of claim 8.

13. (previously presented) Microorganism containing the plasmid of claim 4.

14. (previously presented) Microorganism containing the plasmid of claim 5.

15. (previously presented) Microorganism containing the plasmid of claim 6.